47. The present deplorable condition of the agricultural classes and some measures for their uplift.

Mr. K. G. Thomas (Member, Nominated) said that the ryots of Travancore were suffering from several difficulties owing to constant failure of crops, lack of good manures, absence of associations and committees to inform the Government of their grievances, want of adequate capital, etc. He urged the need for the education of agricultural statistics. He also suggested the following remedial measures:—

(1) that a Ryots' Association be organised in all taluks with a central association known as "The All Travancore Ryots' Association";

(2) that some special arrangements be made to ascertain the causes for failure of crops and to collect agricultural statistics;

(3) that a Provident Fund be instituted to assist the ryots during seasons of failure of crops;

(4) that some measures be adopted to enable the ryots to secure good manures by the opening of a bone factory for the manufacture of bone manure;

(5) that the rules relating to the grant of agricultural loans be modified with a view to enable the poor to secure loans easily and that the rate of interest on agricultural loans be reduced;

(6) that Government might be pleased to afford some relief to the ryots by compensating them for a portion of the loss sustained by them in 1098 and 1099 owing to failure of crops;

(7) that more funds be placed at the disposal of the Agricultural Department; and

(8) that Experimental Agricultural Farms be opened in every village to demonstrate to the ryots the methods of scientific cultivation.

The last point dealt with by the Member related to the system of surveying encroachments. He pointed out that the officers engaged in that work were committing grave atrocities causing irreparable loss to the landholders.

President's reply.—Your suggestion regarding the collection of agricultural statistics as well as the allotment of increased funds for the Agricultural Department are noted.

In regard to the establishment of a bone factory, the Director of Agriculture says that, unlike in European countries where meat is largely used, the supply here is very limited, and so the idea is not a feasible one. The Managing Agents of the Travancore Sugars, Ltd., have agreed to open a Bone Crushing Factory for the preparation of bone manure as an annexé to their Sugar Refinery, when that industry gets into working order.

In regard to your suggestion to reduce the rate of interest for agricultural loans, I may say that the Government pay interest for the Debenture Loan raised by them at the rate of 5 per cent. The matter will, however, be noted for consideration.

Your remaining suggestions are also noted for consideration.

48. Concessions for the development of the Fish Industry.

Mr. K. Velayudhan (Member, Nominated) began by expressing the loyalty of the Araya community towards His Highness the Maha Raja and to the Royal Family and represented that greater facilities might be afforded for the development of fish trade by finding markets for Travancore fish in and outside India. While on that subject, the Member explained how the fluctuations in the market conditions in Burma and other places and the malpractices of commission agents in Burma adversely affected fish trade in Travancore and made pointed reference to the heavy loss sustained by the fisherfolk, especially those living in places to the north of Quilon who were engaged in prawn trade. He thought that the loss was due to the ignorance of the fisherfolk about suitable markets for that commodity. He therefore

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